



UNIVERSITY *of* ALASKA

Many Traditions One Alaska



University of Alaska Health Programs

2008 - 2009

The State of Alaska is in great need of well-prepared graduates in the health care workforce. Shortages abound as health care needs increase and current workers look toward retirement. As one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of Alaska's economy, the health care industry makes up more than one in every 12 jobs in Alaska.

The University of Alaska stands ready to help meet the needs of Alaska's health care workforce. With new and expanding programs, and a new Health Sciences Building on the horizon, there are many programs and job prospects for health students to look forward to at UA.

This University of Alaska Health Programs publication will guide you through many of the health programs offered at the University of Alaska, from medical laboratory technology to psychology, and nursing to dental hygiene.

- **UA has experienced nearly 70 percent growth in health care students and graduates since 2002.**
- **One in every 12 jobs in Alaska is in the health care industry.**
- **Between UAA, UAF and UAS, health students in more than 200 locations across Alaska are taking classes in their discipline.**
- **Alaska will need nearly 50 percent more behavioral health professionals by 2010.**
- **The Alaska WWAMI Program has doubled its enrollment from 10 to 20 students to help meet Alaska's critical physician shortage.**
- **More than 90 percent of nursing graduates intend to remain in Alaska for their first jobs.**
- **The School of Nursing's capacity doubled from 96 admission slots in 2002 to 223 slots in the 2008 academic year.**
- **Enrollment in the University of Alaska's allied health programs has grown by about 130 percent since 2002.**

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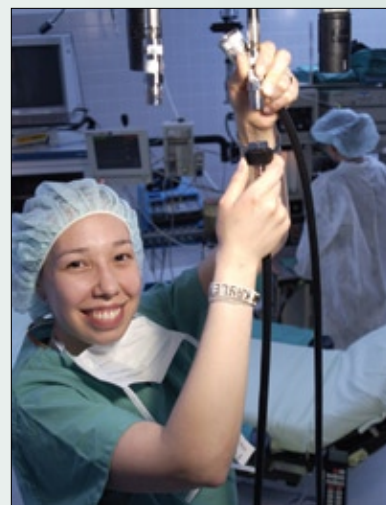


Photo by Mike Corti, Courtesy of Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

From the Associate Vice President, Health Programs

The University of Alaska has a pivotal role to play in meeting the significant health and human service workforce needs of Alaska. State labor projections show a continued strong job forecast for virtually every health care profession. Employers report significant shortages in qualified personnel.

Recent studies show that over \$24 million in costs are added each year to Alaska's health care system from vacancies and the need to import temporary health workers.

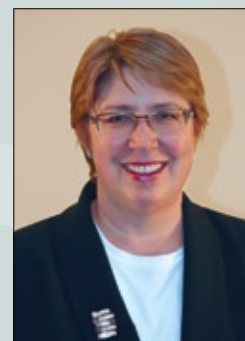
The University has responded by producing thousands of new graduates and creating many new degree programs. Program expansion has been based on a number of principles, including:

- Strategic planning and cooperation between all campuses to enhance offerings and eliminate duplication.
- Export of programs, like nursing, to many sites from a centralized center of excellence through use of distance technology.
- "Grow our own" philosophy, which brings articulated career ladder programs to students in rural and urban settings and at mid-career.
- A focus on students who are place-committed to their local community, and who are more likely to stay upon graduation and practice locally.

I hope you will share my excitement about the future of health workforce development as you read this publication. We have a strong team of health and human services faculty, administrators and staff at the University of Alaska who will continue to push for increasing the quality and quantity of our offerings.

Karen Perdue

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From the Vice Provost, Health Programs

It's exciting to see the incredible growth of Alaska's health care industry. However, this does create a burgeoning demand for health care workers, and challenges the University to respond vigorously to address state needs.

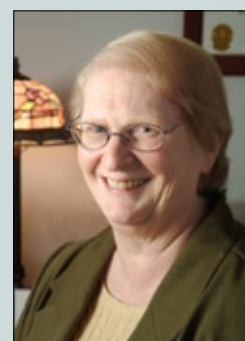
The University of Alaska has a growing reputation for offering quality education in many arenas, especially health care. More people are turning to UA for health care-related training and education. In excess of 70 percent of health-related jobs in 2014 will require at least an associate's degree or significant postsecondary vocational training, and almost 30 percent of those will require a bachelor's degree or higher.

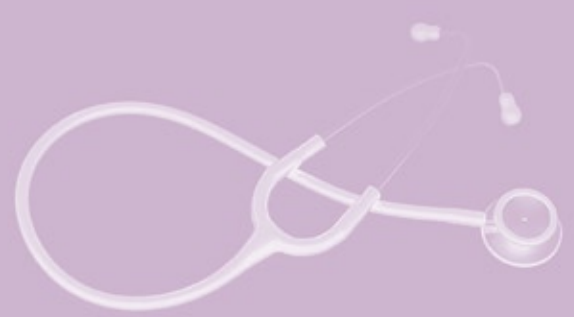
The University will work hand-in-hand with industry, governmental and community entities, and collaborate closely with public and private sector partners, to maintain and develop our programs supporting workforce development and high-demand careers. Specifically, the University of Alaska Anchorage, which educates over 75 percent of UA health students, has prioritized the development of new health care training opportunities.

I hope you enjoy reading this updated University of Alaska Health Programs publication to get all the latest on what UA is doing to help meet our students' interests and state's health care needs.

Jan Harris

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UA Steps Up...

The need for trained workers in the health care industry has never been greater.

The health care industry is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of Alaska's economy. More than one in every 12 jobs in Alaska is in the health care industry. The fastest-growing group of health care-related occupations includes home health aides, paramedics, medical assistants and dental assistants.

A significant number of job openings across the state reflects the demand for new workers, and retirements from the workforce play a major role in the future need for workers in the industry. That's where the University of Alaska comes in.

University of Alaska responds

The University of Alaska has stepped up vigorously to address the state's health care needs. Shortages have been identified in many critical occupations, some at crisis stage. There are significant state and national shortages in the fields of nursing, medicine, pharmacy, physical and occupational therapy, behavioral health, public health, management, and a number of allied health occupations.

UA has experienced nearly 70 percent growth in health care students and graduates since 2002. Between the fall semesters of 2001 and 2007, there was a 68 percent increase in students majoring in a health field, with a growth in numbers from just over 2,000 to more than 4,000. The numbers of degrees and certificates awarded grew from more than 700 in 2001 to nearly 1,300 in 2007, a 66 percent increase.

Distance delivery: Reaching more students in more places

University of Alaska's health programs are available via distance delivery to many Alaska communities, allowing more students access to the education they need to enter into or advance their health careers.

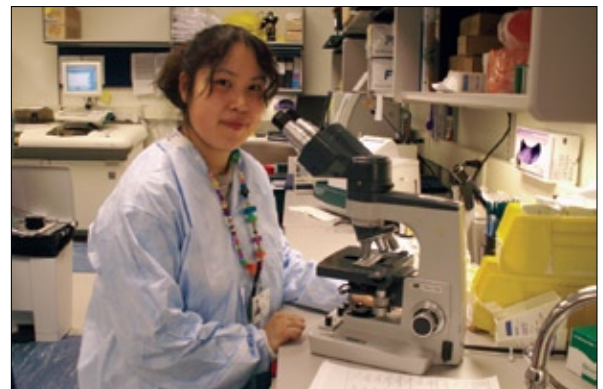
"We've been very aggressive in using distance education for things that people wouldn't normally think could be taught by distance," said Sally Mead, Director of UA's Expanding Access to Health Programs project.

Old models of instruction required students to travel away from their homes – sometimes for several years – to gain the education necessary to become a nurse, pharmacy technician or social worker.



Left: Sue Miller and Nina Mehegak are limited radiography students participating in an "Elluminate Live" session at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Center in Bethel.

Right: Alexia Wassilie, Clinical Lab Assistant student in Bethel.





Distance education now allows Alaskans to prepare for established, well-paying jobs in or near their home communities, previously out of reach for place-committed rural residents.

Distance-delivered courses and programs take many forms. Many have a statewide reach while others are organized regionally. Because students may take courses from more than one campus, or might move from one part of the state to another, aligning courses and programs has become critical in the distance education arena.

The UA Health Programs initiated the Health Distance Education Partnership (HDEP) to increase the number of distance-delivered programs offered through UAA, UAF and UAS. "The success of this initiative depends on a 'hub and spoke' structure that recognizes the importance of community campuses around the state," said Mead. "The partnership between these campuses is essential." During its first three years, the HDEP supported faculty to create or improve 50 courses, including 14

certificates or degrees in nursing, allied, behavioral and public health.

UAA partners with Creighton University to offer distance-delivered Occupational Therapy program

One of the University's newest distance-delivered programs is a joint Occupational Therapy program with Nebraska's Creighton University. Started in August 2008, a group of eight students are participating in Alaska's first student cohort. This distance-delivered pilot program is aimed at addressing Alaska's critical shortage of occupational therapists.

"This partnership responds to the lack of educational opportunity for occupational therapists in Alaska and the shortage of OTs available to practice in this state," said Cheryl Easley, Dean of UAA's College of Health and Social Welfare. "The program increases the likelihood that the graduates will remain in Alaska to work."

Alaska Area Health Education Center

The Alaska Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is a statewide university-industry partnership focused on strengthening Alaska's health workforce that:

- Encourages Alaskans from disadvantaged backgrounds into health careers;
- Coordinates clinical rotations to help students secure employment in underserved areas and with underserved populations; and
- Improves access to continuing education for health professionals in underserved areas.

The Alaska AHEC Program has four partners: the Yukon Kuskokwim AHEC at Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation, the Interior AHEC at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, the South-central AHEC at the Providence Alaska Learning Institute and the Southeast AHEC at the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. The AHEC Program Office and its partner organizations work to synergistically bridge the gap between professional training schools and underserved populations.

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Allied Health

“The majority of our students already have jobs, and our programs allow them to advance their careers.”

People who work in allied health fields make the health care industry tick. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, four of the 10 fastest-growing occupations in Alaska are in allied health.

The University of Alaska has ramped up its offerings to respond to the critical demand for allied health workers throughout Alaska. Formed in 2002, the University of Alaska Allied Health Alliance, a cross-campus planning and coordination group made up of leaders

of the allied health programs, works to expand allied health course offerings across the University’s 16 campuses. The group meets regularly to evaluate offerings and brainstorm ideas on how to address the allied health workforce needs of our state.

In the last seven years alone, enrollment in the University of Alaska’s allied health programs has grown by about 130 percent, and the number of degrees awarded has increased by 86 percent.

The University of Alaska Anchorage’s (UAA) Allied Health Sciences



James Munn graduated from UAA in 2007 with two degrees: an AAS in Radiologic Technology and an AAS in Human Services. After graduation, James moved to Bethel to work as a Radiologist Technician in the Diagnostic Imaging Department at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation.



Photo by Mike Dineen



Photo by Mike Dimneen

Right: Students at UAF's Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel take notes in their anatomy and physiology class.



Photo by Todd Paris

Division, a part of the Community and Technical College, is home to eight allied health program areas including Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, Fire and Emergency Services/Paramedic, Medical Assisting, Medical Laboratory Technology, Pharmacy Technology, Radiologic Technology and Therapeutic Massage.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks' (UAF) Tanana Valley Campus (TVC) offers seven allied health programs: Certified Nurse Aide, Dental Assistant, Dental Hygiene, Emergency Medical Services/Paramedic, Health Care Reimbursement, Medical Assistant, Medical/Dental Receptionist and Phlebotomy. The University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) delivers training in Certified Nurse Aide, Health Information Management, and Personal Care Attendant, in addition to offering

UAA's Medical Laboratory Technology, Pharmacy Technology and Radiologic Technology via distance delivery.

The College of Rural and Community Development (CRCD) Health Programs office at UAF delivers certificates in Health Care Reimbursement to help individuals enter the field of health care, and serves as university liaison to the Community Health Aide/Practitioner Program.

Torie Foote, Director of CRCD Health Programs, explains, "We're continuing to work with tribal health corporations to make sure we're meeting their workforce needs. The majority of our students already have jobs, and our programs allow them to get the training needed to advance their career."

"By offering distance-delivered programs, we are providing greater access

to higher education to all Alaskans," said Sally Mead. "Between UAA, UAF and UAS, allied health students in 213 locations across Alaska are working toward an education to better themselves and the communities they live in. Our distance-delivered programs use several methods of course delivery including web-based courses, audio and video conferencing and hands-on clinical experience."

Growing dental programs keep Alaskans smiling

The UAF Tanana Valley Campus recently added an Associate of Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene to its program offerings. “The demand for dental hygienists in the Fairbanks area is significant,” said Marsha Sousa, Allied Health Programs Coordinator, UAF Tanana Valley Campus. “The support of our local dental community was essential in developing this program, and they continue to help us by teaching and mentoring students in our state-of-the-art dental clinic. The presence of our dental hygiene clinic has increased access to care for our underserved population in particular.”

UAA’s dental programs have also experienced some major changes. Students and faculty are enjoying their

recently remodeled UAA Dental Clinic, featuring 21 dental operatories (14 for hygiene, seven for assisting), a lab, a large classroom and faculty offices. Because of the remodel, the Dental Hygiene program can now enroll 14 students a year.

“We are excited to see how our new facility can change the treatment we give patients and the way our students learn,” said Lynda Hernandez, Student Success Coordinator for UAA’s Allied Health Division.



Courtesy of UAA Dental Programs

The 2007 UAA graduating class of dental hygiene students placed second in the nation on their National Board Examination.

■ = Offered via Distance Delivery ■ = University of Alaska Anchorage ■ = University of Alaska Fairbanks ■ = University of Alaska Southeast

Allied Health Programs

	UAA	UAF	UAS
DENTAL			
Dental Assisting (AAS)	■	■	
Dental Assisting (Certificate)	■	■	
Dental Hygiene (AAS)	■	■	
HEALTH INFORMATION/INPATIENT			
Health Information Management (AAS)			■
Health Care Reimbursement (Certificate)		■	
Health Care Privacy (Certificate)			■
Health Information Management, Coding Specialist (Certificate)			■
Medical Office Specialist (Certificate, OE)			■
MEDICAL OFFICE/OUTPATIENT			
Medical Assisting (Certificate, AAS)	■	■	
Medical Transcription (Courses)	■		
Medical Office Coding (OE)	■		
Medical Billing (OE)		■	
Medical Coding (OE)		■	
Medical Office Reception (OE)		■	
Health Care Reimbursement (Certificate)		■	
Medical/Dental Reception (Certificate)		■	
MEDICAL LABORATORY			
Phlebotomist (OE)	■		
Phlebotomy (6-credit Training)		■	
Clinical Assistant (OE)	■		
Medical Laboratory Technician (AAS)	■		
Medical Technology (BS)	■		

	UAA	UAF	UAS
RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY			
Pre-Radiologic Technology Qualification (Certificate)			■
Radiologic Technology (AAS)	■		
Mammography	■		
Limited Radiography (OE)	■		
EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Paramedic (AAS)	■	■	
Paramedic Academy		■	
Fire and Emergency Services (AAS)	■		
Emergency Medical Services (Certificate, AAS)		■	
Emergency Medical Technology (Courses)	■	■	■
PHARMACY CAREERS			
Pharmacy Technician (OE)	■		
ADDITIONAL ALLIED HEALTH PROGRAMS			
Community Health (AAS)		■	
Community Health/Practice (Certificate)		■	
Allied Health (Pre-Professional)		■	
Health Sciences (AAS)			■
Health Care Management (AAS)		■	
Massage Therapy (Continuing Education)	■		
DIRECT SERVICES			
Personal Care Attendant (PCA)	■	■	■
Certified Nurse Aide/Assistant (CNA)	■	■	■
PCA Bridge to CNA			■

Enrollment in the University of Alaska's allied health programs has grown by about 130 percent.

Photo by Todd Paris



Courtesy of UAA Dental Programs

Above: UAA's remodeled dental clinic features 21 dental operatories, a lab, a large classroom and faculty offices.

Left: A recent remodel of the Tanana Valley Campus Center includes a state-of-the-art dental clinic with six full operatories, three x-ray suites, dental materials lab, sterilization room and dark room. The clinic is home to UAF's dental assisting and dental hygiene programs.



Southcentral Paramedical Technology Program

After a successful start at UAA's Kenai Peninsula College (KPC), the Paramedical Technology Program is growing and will be offered at the Mat-Su College and the Anchorage campuses in the coming years. Paul Perry, a 23-year paramedic and KPC's paramedic instructor,

says that Alaska's paramedic shortage is part of a nationwide need for paramedics and other health care professionals. The program's expansion to Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley will help fill the paramedic positions that are in such high demand in Alaska.

The Southcentral Program offers the 2-year Associate of Applied Science degree, which requires 68 credits including a number of general education courses, many of which are available via distance delivery. At the end of the program, students are required to participate in a 2-3 month field internship at an emergency services organization in the Lower 48.

Students enrolled in this program work with state-of-the-art training tools to gain the hands-on experiences they need to be successful in the paramedic field. KPC has partnered with the Kenai Peninsula Central Emergency Services and the Nikiski Fire Department in a variety of ways resulting in a strong community-supported program. The college has its own ambulance that was donated by the Nikiski Fire Department and is used as a training and recruiting aid. University vocational equipment funds have enabled KPC to purchase a high-tech SimMan mannequin for students to monitor blood pressure, lung sounds and 2,500 different cardiac rhythms.

Courtesy of Kenai Peninsula College



KPC students practice immobilizing and transporting an injured patient.

UAF Tanana Valley Campus Emergency Medical Services/Paramedic Program

The Tanana Valley Campus Emergency Medical Services/Paramedic program is designed to prepare students for an entry-level position as a paramedic within the EMS community. Students can pursue the program at the certificate or associate's degree level, or can take individual EMT courses to meet the Alaska requirements for certification as an Emergency Medical Technician. The certificate program takes three semesters to complete, which includes a 2-3 month field internship with a Lower 48 emergency services operation.

The associate's degree expands upon the certificate program, and includes general education courses.

Students participate in a mock emergency as first responders to the scene.



Courtesy of Kenai Peninsula College

Statewide Estimates for Allied Health Vacancies

Paramedic: 7% vacancy rate, 34 vacancies

Billing/Coding: 4-11% vacancy rate, 101 vacancies

Pharmacists: 23.7% vacancy rate, 98 vacancies

Pharmacy Technician: 5.7% vacancy rate, 27 vacancies

Radiologic Technician: 6% vacancy rate, 22 vacancies

Medical Technologist: 7.7% vacancy rate, 22 vacancies

Med Lab Tech: 6.1% vacancy rate, 9 vacancies

Community Health Aide Program: 18.1% vacancy rate, 100 vacancies

Dental Hygienist: 5.7% vacancy rate, 31 vacancies

Dental Assistant: 8.8% vacancy rate, 98 vacancies

Certified Nurse Assistant: 6.7% vacancy rate, 71 vacancies

Personal Care Attendant: 8.7% vacancy rate, 27 vacancies

Physical Therapist: 16.5% vacancy rate, 84 vacancies

Occupational Therapist: 29.3% vacancy rate, 75 vacancies

Physical Therapy Assistant: 28.6% vacancy rate, 18 vacancies

Source: 2007 Alaska Health Workforce Study,
476 Respondents, Alaska Center for Rural Health

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"The intense, practice-oriented program brings real issues to the table and teaches students to work with community partners..."

Public Health

Public health can be defined as "the science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention." Public health focuses on a population as a whole, rather than the individual. Professionals in public health work to prevent health problems before they occur, and strive to improve the health and well being of people locally, nationally and globally.

Master of Public Health

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program at UAA focuses on public health issues specific to Alaska and the

north. It is designed to enhance health in Alaska's diverse communities and the circumpolar north by preparing leaders to identify, prevent and solve health problems.

Many students are practicing professionals from all corners of the world who bring their broad range of expertise to class discussions. The intense, practice-oriented program brings real issues to the table and teaches students to work with community partners to develop innovative approaches to both current and emerging public health problems.

More than 70 students are engaged in the MPH program, and 21 people now call themselves alumni. Three additional full-time faculty members have recently joined the team, and community-based affiliate faculty now

number more than 25. The program also welcomed Presidential Professor Dr. Richard Windsor in 2007.

Progress is being made toward achieving national accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), with anticipated accreditation by Fall 2009.

"Everything we've done with this program to date has been with national standards of excellence in mind," said Dr. Rhonda Johnson, Department of Health Sciences Chair and MPH Coordinator. "CEPH accreditation, while voluntary, will confirm we are a program of excellence."

For more information:

<http://health.uaa.alaska.edu/mph>

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Culinary Arts and Hospitality, Dietetics and Nutrition program seeks funds to grow its Nutrition program

Alaska is the only state in which a bachelor's degree in nutrition is not offered. There is a growing demand for nutrition education leading to licensure as a registered dietitian. The UAA Culinary Arts and Hospitality, Dietetics and Nutrition program currently offers an AAS in Culinary Arts and a BA in Hospitality Restaurant Management, with a minor in Nutrition. Due to increasing enrollment, the program is seeking funds for a full-time Dietetics and Nutrition assistant professor. This additional funding would make it possible for the program to maintain its excellence and offer baccalaureate education in nutrition sciences.

Health and Fitness Leadership Program

The Bachelor of Science in Physical Education with emphasis in Health and Fitness Leadership, offered through the Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation produced its first graduates in May 2006. This career pathway has more than 100 active majors and prepares students for employment in clinical-based health; education and fitness programs; fitness facilities; worksite health promotion programs; or further studies in physical therapy, coaching and teaching, exercise and sport science, exercise rehabilitation or other health-related areas.



Nursing

School of Nursing chips away at nursing shortage, continues to grow

Growth seems to be a common theme in the School of Nursing. After meeting its goal to double the number of basic nursing graduates, the School of Nursing is continuing to grow with plans to accept an additional 16 students into its AAS program in Anchorage.

In 2002, the University/Industry Nursing Education Task Force established the goal of doubling the number of basic nursing graduates (AAS and BS programs) from the UAA School of

Nursing by 2006. That goal was reached, and the School's capacity doubled from 96 admission slots in 2002 to 223 slots in the 2008 academic year. The baccalaureate nursing program increased the number of students in each admission cohort from 32 to 40, and admits three cohorts a year, instead of two.

"We're continuing to increase our capacity by hiring more faculty members and admitting more students," said Jean Ballantyne, Director of UAA's School of Nursing.

The School of Nursing offers Associate of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science

in Nursing and Master of Science degrees. The School also offers an LPN to AAS option and an RN to BS option to help Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses transition into the next phase of their careers.

The Associate of Applied Science prepares students to provide direct nursing care to individuals in inpatient settings and structured outpatient settings. Students gain clinical experience in hospitals, nursing homes and clinics. The program is offered via distance delivery to 12 communities across Alaska.

Photo by Mike Dimneen



Left: Two associate's program nursing students learn to move a patient with a mechanical patient lift in the nursing simulation lab.

Photo by Mike Dinneen



Right: Kenai Peninsula College nursing student Cindy Miller examines a "practice" patient's ear.



Courtesy of Kenai Peninsula College

By expanding the number of communities where students can enroll in the AAS program, the School of Nursing plans to eventually graduate about 240 to 250 students each year, according to Jackie Pflaum, Associate Director of the School of Nursing.

"That's the number of new nurses the health care industry in Alaska has indicated it can absorb on an annual basis," she said.

The Associate of Applied Science in Nursing program is offered in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kodiak, Bethel, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kenai, Sitka, Homer, Mat-Su, Kotzebue and Valdez, using a blended delivery model with online and on-site clinical instruction.

Ballantyne said that sites in Petersburg, Barrow, Nome and Dillingham are also being evaluated for future offerings.

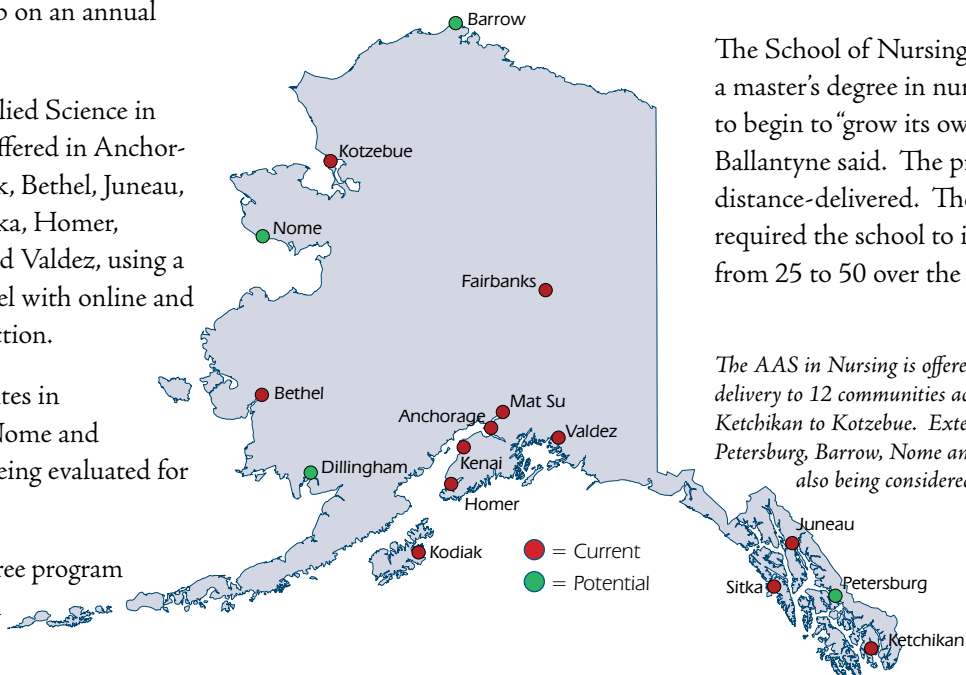
The baccalaureate degree program provides students with

both theory and clinical experiences to enable them to assess, plan, implement and evaluate health care to meet the needs of individuals, families, groups and communities. Students may choose from two options: the Basic Student Option and the Registered Nurse Option.

For those who seek to further their nursing education, the School of

Nursing offers a Master of Science in Nursing. Graduate studies at the master's level place primary emphasis upon advanced professional nursing practice, theory, research and health care delivery systems. Students may select one of four specialty tracks: Family Nurse Practitioner, Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Health Care Administration or Nursing Education.

The School of Nursing has developed a master's degree in nursing education to begin to "grow its own" faculty, Ballantyne said. The program is fully distance-delivered. The expansion required the school to increase faculty from 25 to 50 over the past four years.



The AAS in Nursing is offered via distance delivery to 12 communities across Alaska, from Ketchikan to Kotzebue. Extension sites in Petersburg, Barrow, Nome and Dillingham are also being considered for future offerings.

“With the nationwide nursing faculty shortage, we need to prepare the educators of the future, too,” she said.

Even with the expanded programs, nursing vacancy rates in Alaska have held steady at around 8 percent for the past four years, she said, but coming retirements are anticipated to greatly increase the need for nurses worldwide.

By 2020, the Health Resources and Services Administration estimates the U.S. will be short more than 800,000 RNs.

“The best news for Alaska is our preliminary data shows more than 90 percent of our graduates intend to remain in Alaska for their first jobs,” Pflaum said.

Shara Sutherland, Chief Nurse Executive for Providence Alaska Medical Center, says that 40 of the 50 nurses they’ve hired over the past year are graduates of UAA’s School of Nursing. “There’s no doubt that we’ll exceed the number of nurses we hired last year,”

she said. “Providence offers many opportunities for new graduates to strengthen their skills through externships, internships and fellowships.”

Similarly, the Alaska Native Medical Center has added 25 new nurses in 2008. “About 95 percent of our new nurses come from UAA,” said Julie McNulty, ANMC Nursing Internship Coordinator.

Ballantyne adds, “Nursing education can’t stand alone. We rely heavily on our community partnerships to provide students with the clinical experiences they need to be successful in this field.”

As long as the Alaska health care industry can continue to hire the new graduates, university officials expect these numbers to stay up over time. The School of Nursing also is looking ahead by updating its comprehensive strategic plan to address the continued expansion and

development of its programs, while also improving communication, student responsiveness, and faculty recruitment, retention and development.

For more information:

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Nursing Program Outreach Sites

Academic Year	Nursing Program Outreach Sites	No. of Sites
2000	Anchorage	1
2001	Fairbanks, Kodiak	3
2004	Bethel, Juneau, Ketchikan	6
2005	Kenai, Sitka	8
2006	Homer, Mat-Su, Kotzebue	11
2008	Valdez	12

Photo by Mike Dimmeen



Nursing Workforce Diversity Program

The School of Nursing started the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program (NWDP) in 2006 to address the lack of diversity in Alaska’s nursing workforce. Since its inception, 35 people have graduated from the program. NWDP is designed to increase the number of ethnic minorities in the nursing workforce to match that of Alaska’s diverse population, and to increase the opportunities for educationally and economically disadvantaged students.

RRANN is about building a community to help support students so they're more likely to succeed.

Courtesy of Kenai Peninsula College



Photo by Mike Dineen

Left: Nursing students at Kenai Peninsula College's Kenai River Campus train on a simulated patient.

Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing - RRANN

The Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing (RRANN) program, housed within the School of Nursing, is designed to increase the number of Alaska Natives and American Indians who graduate with Associate of Applied Science or Bachelor of Science degrees in nursing.

The program offers an extra level of support to students through advising, college preparation counseling, admission planning, and providing

information about degree programs and course requirements. RRANN provides free tutoring, student-led study sessions, weekly social meetings with cultural themes and guest speakers, financial assistance and on-campus housing. Formal mentoring is also available to eligible students in partnership with the Alaska Native Medical Center.

"We're here to help students transition into college," said Randi Madison-Jacobs, RRANN Coordinator. "Many of our students come to us educationally and financially underprepared, and are experiencing culture shock. RRANN is about building a community to help support students so they're more likely to succeed."

Bethel students:
Gracie Nelson, Mary Devlin,
Evelina Achee.

Alaska Natives/American Indians comprise approximately 16 percent of the state's population. RRANN hopes to increase the number of Alaska Natives/American Indian nurses in Alaska to match that percentage.

"If we increase the number of Alaska Native nurses in our state, it will make a huge impact on the quality of care for Alaska Native patients," said Madison-Jacobs. "They speak the language and understand the philosophies – there's a level of trust involved."

Since RRANN's beginning in 1998, 90 students have graduated from the program. A 10-year anniversary party was held on April 25, 2008 to celebrate the program's many accomplishments and service to our community.

For more information:

<http://nursing.uaa.alaska.edu/rrann/>

www.tvc.uaf.edu/programs/health/nursing.html

Courtesy of RRANN



Medical Education



Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program, Alaska's Medical School, doubles students to address physician shortage

*T*he Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program at UAA is an affiliate of the University of Washington School of Medicine and is part of a collaborative medical school agreement among the states of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho.

WWAMI, an acronym for the participating states, has teaching sites for medical students in more than 100 towns and cities across the five-state region. Six state universities, and more than 4,500 volunteer physicians and other clinicians in the region, join in educating and training WWAMI medical students. Alaskans can complete three of the four years of medical school in Alaska through WWAMI.

The Alaska WWAMI Program began at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1971 and moved to the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1989. Historically, only 10 Alaska residents have been admitted to the Alaska WWAMI Program each year, but through the combined efforts of the Alaska WWAMI Program, the University of Alaska, physician and health care communities, and the Alaska legislature, the program now accepts 20 students per year.

Alaska WWAMI students complete their first year of medical school at UAA. Students from all five WWAMI states take second year classes at the University of Washington School of Medicine. The series of six-week clinical clerkships that comprise the 3rd and 4th years of the curriculum can be taken throughout the five-state

region. The Alaska Track is a means to complete nearly all of these in Alaska.

The program was again ranked No. 1 in Primary Care education in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2009 list of America's Best Graduate Schools for the 15th consecutive year. WWAMI was also ranked No. 1 in Rural Medicine and Family Medicine for 17 consecutive years.

For more information:

<http://biomed.uaa.alaska.edu/>

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The WWAMI program makes it possible for medical students to complete three of their four years of medical school in Alaska.



Courtesy of Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program

In the next decade, Alaska will need approximately 100 new physicians per year.

Courtesy of Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program



Starting in Fall 2007, 20 Alaskans were admitted to the Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program, doubling its class size from 10 per year since 1971. A report released by the Alaska Physician Supply Task Force predicts that in the next decade, Alaska will need approximately 100 new physicians per year.

Physician Assistant Program

Expanded program to reduce primary care shortages across Alaska

UAA's Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences Physician Assistant (PA) Program is growing dramatically this coming year. The first year class of 18 to 24 Physician Assistant students begins in Anchorage in Summer 2009. This doubles the volume of Alaskans served, and allows all training to be completed in Alaska. The two-year program is a collaborative effort with the University of Washington MEDEX Northwest Physician Assistant Program, developed in response to the need for practitioners in rural and underserved communities.

This program has been training PAs for Alaska's communities since 1972. Students entering the program are required to have significant health care experience prior to application. This training model creates opportunities for

second career students with prior health care experience (e.g. community health aides and practitioners, paramedics and emergency medical technicians, military medics, nurses, allied health workers) to move up into the health care practitioner role. Over half of the practicing PAs in Alaska have been trained in the MEDEX Program.



The first year classroom portion of the program will be delivered in Anchorage and the second year will consist of clinical rotations throughout Alaska and the Northwest region.

After completing the PA program, students are eligible to sit for the National Certifying Examination for Physician Assistants. The University of Washington School of Medicine also grants a Physician Assistant Certificate

upon successful completion of the program.

The Physician Assistant is one of the top 10 fastest growing positions in the United States. Physicians and institutions are expected to employ more PAs to provide primary care and to assist with medical and surgical procedures, as they are cost-effective and productive members of the health care team.

This more robust program will also allow additional opportunities for rural health professionals to continue their professional development and increase the retention of those who have a higher likelihood of returning to their home communities.

For more information:

www.health.alaska.edu/bshs/

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Behavioral Health

UA - addressing Alaska's behavioral health needs through education, training and research.

Alaska, being a largely rural state, has historically had difficulties recruiting and retaining an effective behavioral health workforce. As Alaska's public university, the University of Alaska has a responsibility to address the state's behavioral health needs through education, training and research.

The University of Alaska is the premier educator of Alaska's behavioral health workforce, with educational pathway programs ranging from non-degree trainings and certificates to doctoral programs. The University of Alaska graduates roughly 300 social workers, psychologists and human services professionals each year.

However, the need far exceeds the supply. Karen Ward, Director of the Center for Human Development, said that Alaska will need nearly 50 percent more behavioral health professionals by 2010.

According to Cheryl Easley, Dean of the College of Health and Social Welfare at the University of Alaska Anchorage, behavioral health professionals work in a wide variety of fields, such as psychology, human services, rehabilitation, nursing and social work, that provide mental health, behavioral health and substance use disorder services to individuals (children and adults), families and communities.

Activities can include prevention and treatment of mental illness and substance abuse, and assistance with solving problems associated with mental or physical disabilities, Easley said.

"Alaska has significant behavioral health issues that demand attention," said Easley. "There is a high rate of substance abuse and suicide in our state, and we need to prepare for the high number of war veterans returning home who may be experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder."

Behavioral Health Initiative Partnership

The Behavioral Health Initiative Partnership was established to address the severe workforce shortages in the behavioral health field at all levels of licensure and credentialing. The University of Alaska, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services joined forces to address current and future demand for behavioral health professionals.

In May 2004 a summit was held to develop a strategic plan for addressing the supply of behavioral health workers in Alaska. Policy direction from that meeting included:

- Increase the supply of workers at all degree levels;

- Improve course and program articulation across all campuses;
- Increase cultural competence skills of the workforce; and
- Ensure curriculum reflects new practice trends including integration of substance abuse and mental health practices.

In the last year, the AMHTA has assumed a greater leadership role by establishing a more focused effort on workforce. This has brought more partners, such as the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and the Annapolis Coalition, a national university-based organization focused on workforce.

Statewide comprehensive efforts revolve

Behavioral Health Programs	UAA	UAF	UAS
PSYCHIATRIC NURSING			
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (MS)	■		
SOCIAL WORK			
Social Work (BSW, MSW)	■		
Social Work (BA)		■	
Social Work Management (Graduate Certificate)	■		
PSYCHOLOGY			
Clinical-Community Psychology (Ph.D.)	■	■	
Clinical Psychology (MS)	■		
Community Psychology - Guidance and Counseling (MA)			■
Community Mental Health Services (OE)	■		
Psychology (BA, BS)	■	■	
HUMAN SERVICES			
Human Services (AAS, BHS)	■	■	
Conflict Resolution (OE)	■		
Rural Human Services (Certificate)		■	
DISABILITY/RESIDENTIAL SERVICES			
Disabilities Services (Certificate, AAS)	■		
Children's Residential Services (OE, Certificate)	■		
Project Success	■		

■ = Offered via Distance Delivery

around education and training, recruitment and retention.

Some new efforts at the University include:

Ph.D. Program in Clinical-Community Psychology with Rural, Indigenous Emphasis

The Ph.D. Program in Clinical-Community Psychology with Rural, Indigenous Emphasis is jointly delivered and administered by the Departments of Psychology at UAF and UAA. The program is designed to prepare scientist-practitioners who join theory, practice and research to meet behavioral health needs and improve the well-being of Alaskans. It combines the spirit of clinical, community and cultural psychology, placing strong emphasis on non-traditional service delivery and social action, as well as clinical service delivery to individuals, groups, families and communities. The first students will graduate in 2011.

Specialties in Children's Mental Health

Several programs have been developed to meet the growing need of serving the special needs of children in Alaska, rather than sending those children outside of Alaska for care. Faculty are being trained in working with very young children and their families, and a special certificate in children's behavioral health has been established.

The certificate is a series of five courses that focus on issues related to children in out-of-home care. Completion of the program leads to an occupational endorsement from UAA.

Distance MSW Program

The Distance MSW Program was created between UA and AMHTA in 2003. In an effort to increase the

number of graduate prepared social workers statewide, the distance MSW program was expanded in 2005 by adding a second cohort to the program, doubling the number of MSW students. A total of 18 students have completed their degrees thus far, with 18 due to graduate in 2009.

BSW Social Work Cohort

The UAF Social Work Cohort is a unique group of 25 rural Alaska students who are working toward a bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) through a combination of face-to-face and audio-conference modalities. The program's overall mission is to "grow our own" practitioners from rural communities. This method of instruction is highly successful, as students form a bond with fellow classmates, and receive course instruction from university instructors and Alaska Native Elders, incorporating both Western and traditional approaches to learning.

UAA and UAF Human Services

The UAA and UAF Human Services behavioral health workforce development programs will continue their efforts to increase the number of skilled Alaskans prepared to work within Alaska's behavioral health agencies and to enter the behavioral health workforce pathway. UAA and UAF Human Services are working to grow clinicians and program managers across Alaska that will work with Trust beneficiaries and at-risk youth and their families.

Trust Training Cooperative

The Trust Training Cooperative was developed and funded to implement a statewide cooperative that serves as a training clearinghouse designed to broker and coordinate existing trainings and when needed, provide training, education and career development

opportunities, for the current and future workforce engaged with Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries. With staff located in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Sitka, the cooperative is able to work with local service providers to coordinate and share training opportunities to address workforce issues.

Alaska Rural Behavioral Health Training Academy

The Alaska Rural Behavioral Health Training Academy works to identify and respond to the needs of rural behavioral health providers. The Academy provides learner-centered continuing education courses for degree providers, academic credit for non-degree providers, Alaska Native cultural attunement workshops for non-Native providers, tele-behavioral health education for rural providers and their urban counterparts, a workplace-based learning program and several conferences each year.

Strategic Partners

In the last year, Alaska's three main behavioral health partners have taken their partnership to a new level. The University of Alaska, the Trust and the Department of Health and Social Services have hired a coordinator to further develop the strategic direction of their work together. Kathryn Craft began her role as the Behavioral Health Workforce Coordinator in July 2008. Kathy is detailed to the University of Alaska System, but remains also an employee of the State under the direction of Commissioner Bill Hogan. She plays a pivotal role in formulation of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Workforce efforts, under the direction of Delisa Culpepper, COO of the Trust.

Kathryn Craft, Behavioral Health Workforce Coordinator
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Facilities

The new Health Sciences Building on UAA's campus will help meet tremendous industry need.

Demand for health care workers in Alaska is expected to grow faster than any other employment sector over the next decade. University of Alaska enrollments in all health programs, the majority of which are housed at UAA, have grown dramatically in the last few years. Although the need for and enrollment of health care students has skyrocketed, UAA currently lacks the proper facilities to house these programs. But that will soon change.

The University received funding from the State of Alaska in June 2008 for \$46M to build a new Health Sciences Building on UAA's campus. This building is essential in moving the University forward in addressing Alaska's health care workforce needs. FY09 funding provides \$40M for construction of the building and \$6M for infrastructure development.

Phase I of this project is the 62,500 gross-square-foot building, which will be situated across Providence Drive from the main campus. UAA is a major institution in the U-Med District and is conveniently situated among some of Anchorage's major medical facilities.

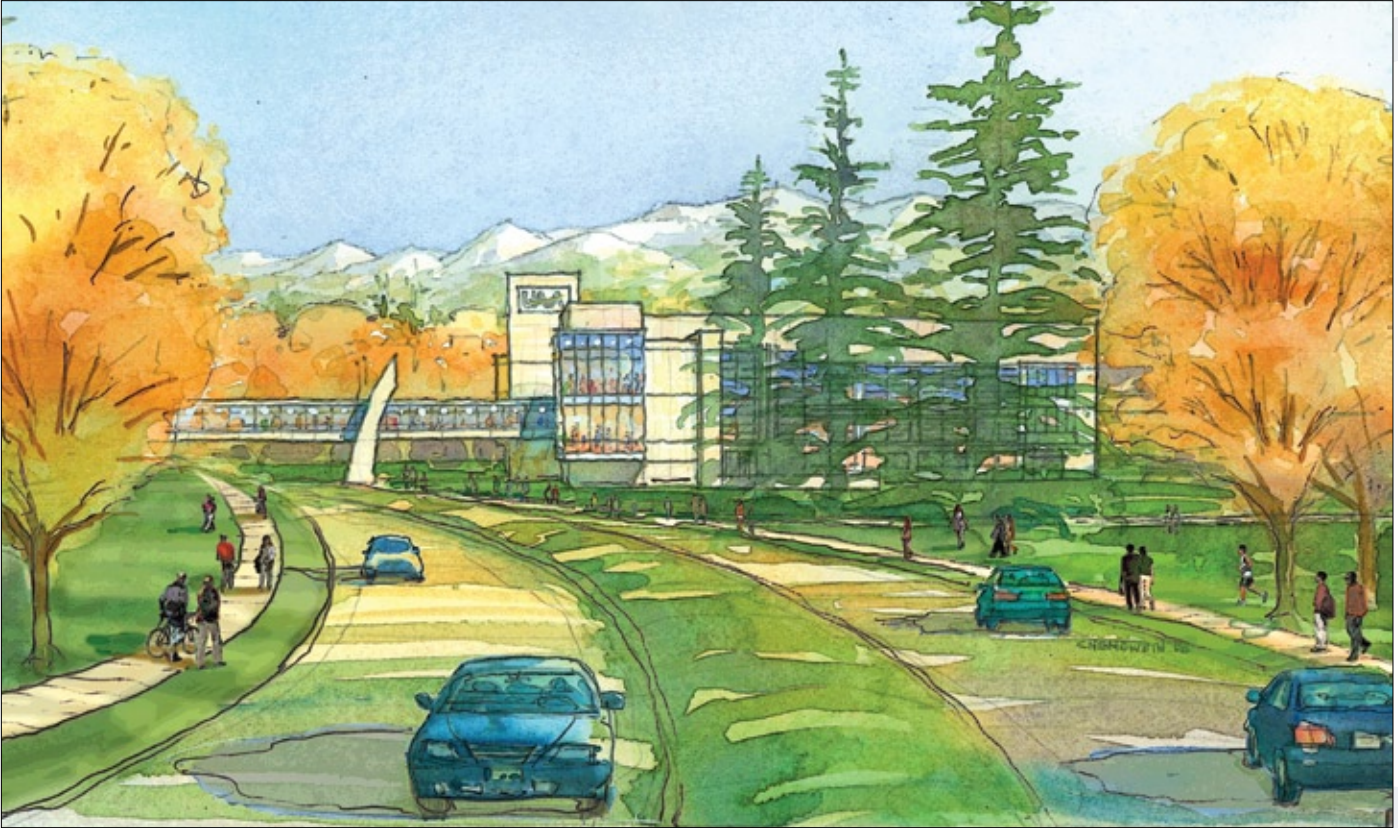
The building's location is ideal for UAA to continue strengthening its partnerships with nearby U-Med District partners – and others in the health care industry – to deliver state-of-the-art training to students.

The proposed Health Sciences Building will be three stories, and will house the medical, nursing, clinical laboratory and physician assistant programs. Classrooms and student services will be located on the ground floor, instructional laboratories will be located on the second level, with faculty and staff offices on the top floor.

View of the existing UAA and Providence Hospital campuses (yellow) with the proposed Health Sciences Complex site plan. Phase I of the new Health Sciences Building is in orange.



Courtesy of Livingston Stone, Inc.



An artist's rendering of the proposed UAA Health Sciences Building.

Master planning is occurring for future development of the health sciences campus, with a second phase of the initial building to accommodate many additional programs, and room on the campus for further growth. It is expected that pedestrian bridges will link the building to future buildings on the health sciences campus and to the main UAA campus.

Some of the building's features will include:

- Distance classrooms to connect students from rural communities
- Clinical and instructional laboratories and classrooms
- Instructional spaces designed for interactive learning and collaborative hands-on experiences

Development of the Health Sciences Complex was included in the UAA Master Plan and is in keeping with UA's Strategic Plan, focusing on student success, educational quality, faculty and staff strength, and responsiveness to Alaska's needs, technology and facility development.

Interactive Simulation Labs

A simulation center is, "a replication of a clinical setting that allows the learner an opportunity to integrate theory and practice, think critically and ensure patient safety." Technology is integral to all aspects of health education. Instructional space in Phase I of the Health Sciences Building will provide increased opportunities for use of simulation in the educational process. An interdisciplinary simulation laboratory planned for Phase II of the building will create a

dynamic place for collaborative scholarship and discovery.

UAA's new labs will:

- Promote collaborative, interdisciplinary learning;
- Replicate real-life clinical situation settings;
- Allow students an opportunity to integrate theory and practice, think critically and ensure patient safety;
- Increase confidence in skills prior to clinical experience; and
- Provide training in physical assessment, medical/surgical, maternity/pediatrics, critical care and operating rooms.

The use of human simulators in health curricula has increased greatly over the past decade. They present students with problem-solving encounters that require real-time assessment of a problem. A student's experience with simulation is rewarding and helpful in increasing their self-confidence prior to entering a clinical unit.



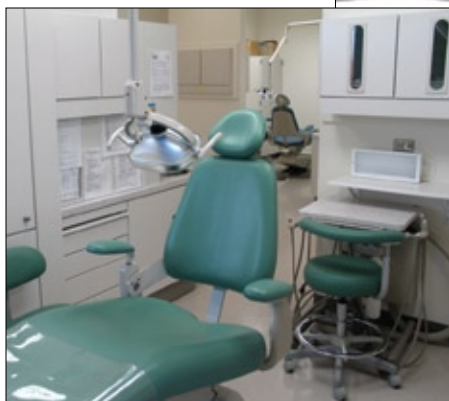
UAF's Tanana Valley Campus seeks additional funding to complete remodel of the Tanana Valley Campus Center

In 2004 the Tanana Valley Campus (TVC) was awarded a \$1.5M grant from the Denali Commission to begin partial renovations on the 4th floor of the Tanana Valley Campus Center to be used for the TVC Allied Health Learning Center.

The 4th floor remodel resulted in:

- A state-of-the-art dental clinic with six full operatories, three x-ray suites, dental materials lab, sterilization room and dark room. The clinic is home to UAF's dental assisting and dental hygiene programs.
- One nursing lab with four beds for training UAA nursing students.
- One multi-use classroom

TVC is seeking an additional \$5M from the Alaska State Legislature to convert un-renovated space into up-to-date labs and a medical assisting clinical space, a multi-use classroom, a phlebotomy and clinical sciences teaching facility, and another nursing lab for training Certified Nurse Aide students.



Tanana Valley Campus recent renovations helped greatly to provide the necessary room and training facilities required for the growing needs of interior Alaska's students.



Images courtesy of Tanana Valley Campus

The University of Alaska would like to thank the following donors who made contributions of \$500 or more between June 1, 2007 and July 30, 2008 to support health programs at any UA campus. The generous support of community partners like these is helping UA health programs to grow and meet with community need for qualified and well trained allied health, nursing and medical professionals.

Thank you!

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Alaska Interstate Construction
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
American Academy of Family Physicians

November 2008

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